



**Woman's best friend:** Every day is a dog day at Sandy Bradley's farm just outside Bolt. Here Brad-

ley plays in the yard with Lady, a black Lab, and Brandy, a chocolate Lab.

# Some won't bolt to the big city

By Lisa Sumter

Press-Gazette

**BOLT** — You might say Bolt has gone to the dogs.

At least it looks that way when you drive through the tiny Kewaunee County community on a weekday.

With most people at work in the daylight hours, the most visible residents of Bolt are a collie, a golden retriever, a bevy of beagles and a pair of playful Labrador retrievers.

**Press-Gazette photos by Sandee Gerbers**

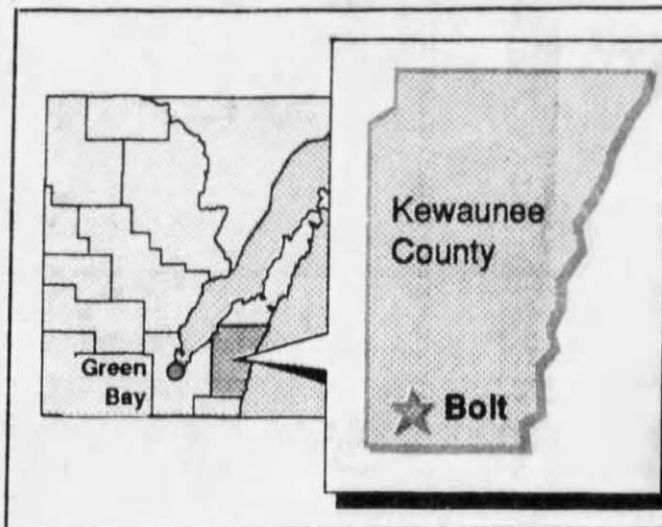
Bolt is situated amid acres of farmland about 20 miles southeast of Green Bay. A handful of homes, some old buildings and a tiny lake are located here. The community's only visible business, The Frontier Tavern, will close soon, the owners say.

It was necessary to go beyond the "city limits" to "suburban Bolt" to find someone at home on one recent day.

Paul Hoverson is the grandson of a Norwegian immigrant who settled near Bolt in 1868. A retired farmer, Hoverson now spends most of his time at his farmhouse at Route 1, Denmark. It is the home where he was born in 1903 and his father was born in 1868.

A quiet man with a warm, easy smile, Hoverson remembers the bustling Bolt of many years ago. He and other residents said Bolt once had a cheese factory, butcher shop, general store, school, sawmill and blacksmith shop.

"When I was young, that's when Bolt was really booming," Hoverson said. "Nowadays people go to the bigger



towns."

One of the most popular spots in the community through the decades was the Lake View Ballroom.

"Those were the days when you went to a dance and you came home and it was already daylight," Hoverson said.

Hoverson was there on Easter Sunday in 1928 when fire destroyed the hall. Firefighters put hoses in a nearby creek to douse the flames, but the lines became clogged with mud and the building was gutted.

"I had gone down there to get a loaf of bread and I no more than got there and a neighbor came running out yelling fire," Hoverson said. "The air got to it and it really took off."

The ballroom was rebuilt but burned down again about 8 years ago. Residents say its absence has left a void.

Most Bolt residents who don't work on farms have jobs in Green Bay and Manitowoc. They travel to those cities for shopping and entertainment too.

Sandy Bradley, Route 1, Denmark,

## The Bolt file

☐ **Population:** 25-30 as estimated by Sandy Bradley.

☐ **Still standing:** The uses have changed, but several of Bolt's old buildings still are around. The defunct Bolt Sportsman's Club and an old blacksmith shop are storage sheds. Bolt's first school is vacant.

☐ **Short name:** A book on Bolt says it was named for Charles Griswold Boalt, Algoma judge and merchant. Over time, the "a" was dropped.

runs a farm with her husband Wayne. She likes rural life and is a co-leader of the Bolt Buccaneers 4-H Club.

"I like the openness of it all — I like farming," she said. "I sometimes think we in the country are closer to our neighbors who live a mile away than the people in the city."

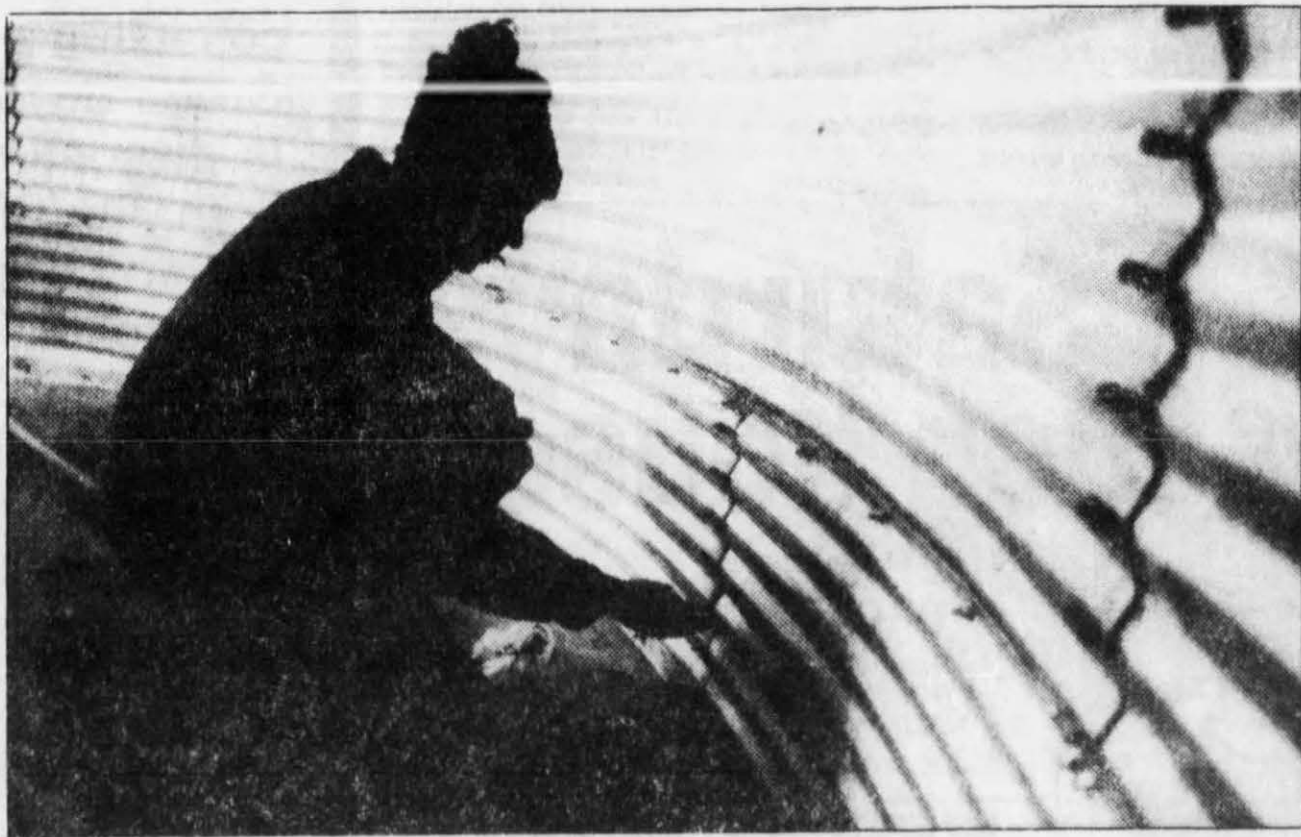
While she likes the wide open spaces of the Bolt area, Bradley admits she wouldn't mind being closer to the city for more convenient shopping.

Charles Chada, Route 1, Denmark, lives in the heart of Bolt. He talked about his community during a break at Denmark Middle School in the village of Denmark, where he is a teacher.

"This used to be a booming little town in the early 1940s," he said. "Now it's known mostly as a fishing area."

Heidmann, Chada and Sheas lakes are all nearby. Heidmann's Lake has a boat launch and is a Kewaunee County park.

■ **Next week:** Forestville in Door County



**Farming's nuts and bolts:** Dennis Schultz is sheltered from a cold

wind as he works inside a grain storage bin on a farm near Bolt.



**Happy memories:** Paul Hoverson recalls the days when Bolt was an active community.